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**The Comptroller General  
of the United States**

Washington, D.C. 20548

## **Decision**

**Matter of:** IBI Security Service, Inc.

**File:** B-233726.2

**Date:** April 6, 1989

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### **DIGEST**

1. Protest of solicitation requirement that guards receive 80 hours of training prior to assignment to duty is denied where protester does not show that required training exceeds the government's minimum needs.

2. Protest that refresher training should be required on a monthly, rather than an annual, basis is denied where protester does not show that annual training would be insufficient to keep guards up-to-date with regard to their job responsibilities.

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### **DECISION**

IBI Security Service, Inc., protests the training requirements in invitation for bids (IFB) No. N62472-89-B-5804, issued by the Department of the Navy for security guard services at the Naval Aviation Supply Office in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We deny the protest.

The IFB requires that all guards complete "Phase One" training prior to assignment to duty. This training encompasses a minimum of 80 hours of instruction in certain subject areas specified in the solicitation, including 16 hours of firearms proficiency training. The IFB further requires that once assigned to duty, all guards receive a minimum of 40 hours of in-service training annually.

IBI argues that a guard should be required to complete only 40 hours of training prior to assignment since that is the number of hours of training that is required for a security guard to obtain a "235 card." (Although IBI does not explain what a 235 card is, we understand it to be a state license).

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The Navy responds that the number of hours of training required to obtain a state license is irrelevant since the duties to be performed by guards under the solicitation, which include roving and perimeter patrols at a military installation are not necessarily comparable to the duties that a guard with a state license would perform. According to the agency, 80 hours of training prior to assignment is necessary to ensure that the guards understand their duties and are prepared to perform them and to address potential crises.

The determination of the government's minimum needs and the best method of accommodating them is primarily the responsibility of the contracting agency since agency officials, not competing firms or our Office, are most familiar with the conditions under which the supplies or services will be used. Thus, we will not question an agency's determination of its minimum needs unless there is a clear showing that the determination had no reasonable basis. Energy Systems Maintenance, Inc., B-227357, Aug. 14, 1987, 87-2 CPD ¶ 158.

IBI has made no such showing here. The protester does not argue that the training is not reasonably related to the duties the guards must perform, nor has it shown that such training can be satisfactorily completed in less than 80 hours. See Allied Security, Inc. of Maryland, B-201365, May 4, 1981, 81-1 CPD ¶ 337. Furthermore, although the protester argues that it would be more economical for the agency to require only 40 hours of training prior to assignment and the rest later so as to minimize the expense incurred by the contractor in training individuals who then elect not to work, we think that it is reasonable for the agency to require that the guards be fully trained before they report for duty. We therefore deny this basis of protest.

The protester also argues that the requirement for 40 hours of phase two (i.e., refresher) training annually should be stated as a monthly requirement so that the contractor cannot provide all the training at the end of the contract period. The protester contends that a requirement for monthly training will help to ensure that employees are always up-to-date in their understanding of their responsibilities.

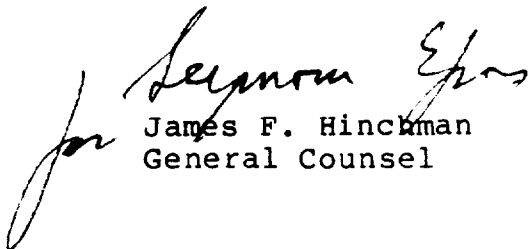
We see no reason to question the agency's determination that refresher training on an annual basis will be sufficient to keep the guards abreast of their duties. At the same time, we see nothing in the solicitation that would prevent the

contractor from performing a portion of the refresher training each month if it prefers. We therefore deny this basis of protest as well.

In responding to the protest, the contracting officer points out that since the phase two training is stated as an annual requirement, while the base period of the contract will be only 6 months, the contractor may not be required to perform the phase two training at all unless the government exercises an option to extend performance for an additional year. In its comments on the agency report, the protester argues that by taking the position that phase two training will not be required unless an option is exercised, the agency has altered the solicitation's training requirements.

Although we find the protester's argument on this point to be difficult to follow, we understand its position to be that the solicitation on its face requires the performance of phase two training during the base period of the contract. We do not agree. The IFB clearly states that the refresher training is to be performed on an annual basis. Thus, we think that the contracting officer's interpretation of the requirement is reasonable--i.e., that the contractor will not be required to provide the refresher training during the base period of the contract since the base period is less than 1 year.

The protest is denied.

  
James F. Hinchman  
General Counsel